

GOTTMAN – RAPOPORT

Conflict Blueprint

STEP 1: LISTENING & VALIDATION

No one can engage in persuasion until both of you can state your partner's position to your partner's satisfaction. Slow down. Support your partner to stay in "what's this?" mode instead of "what the hell is this?" mode. Take turns as:

Speaker:

- No blaming, no "you" statements.
- Talk about your feelings.
- Use only "I" statements about a specific situation.
- State **positive** need. Within every complaint, there is a longing and a recipe.

Listener:

- Postpone your own agenda. Hear and repeat the content of the speaker's needs and perspective (the story).
- Hear the speaker's feelings (name emotions, feel them).
- **Validate** the speaker by completing the sentence, "It makes sense to me that you would feel that way and have these needs, because..."
- OK to ask questions.

FLOODED?

Take a break, self-soothe.

Rapoport's assumption of similarity.

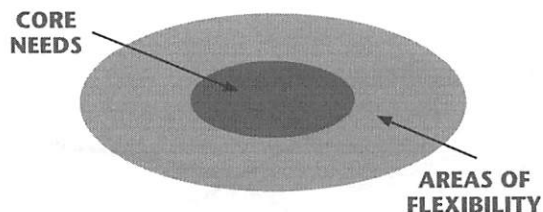
*When you identify a negative quality in your partner, try to see that very quality in yourself.
When you identify a positive quality in yourself, try to see that very quality in your partner.*

STEP 2: DREAMS WITHIN CONFLICT BLUEPRINT

For gridlocked, perpetual problems:

Postpone Persuasion. Explore the history and meaning within each person's ideal dream. Honor one another's dreams. The goal here is dialogue, understanding, and the acceptance of enduring personality differences.

STEP 3: COMPROMISE & PROBLEM-SOLVING



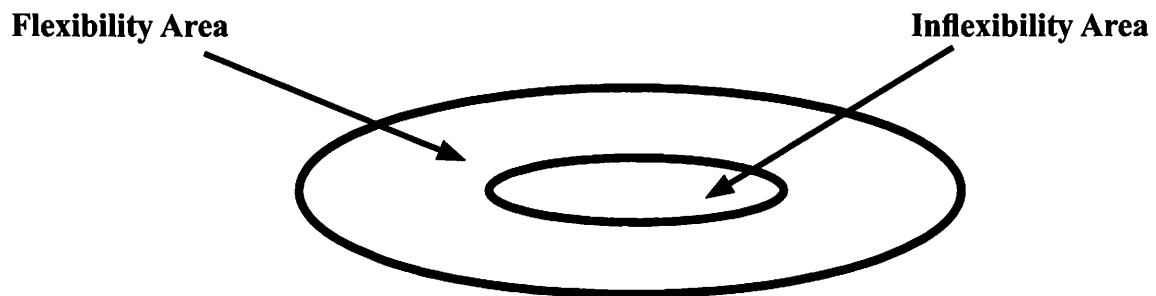
This is where persuasion belongs. To feel safe, first identify your core need and help your partner understand why it is core. Then compromise on areas of flexibility.

STEP 4: THE AFTERMATH OF REGRETTABLE INCIDENTS BLUEPRINT

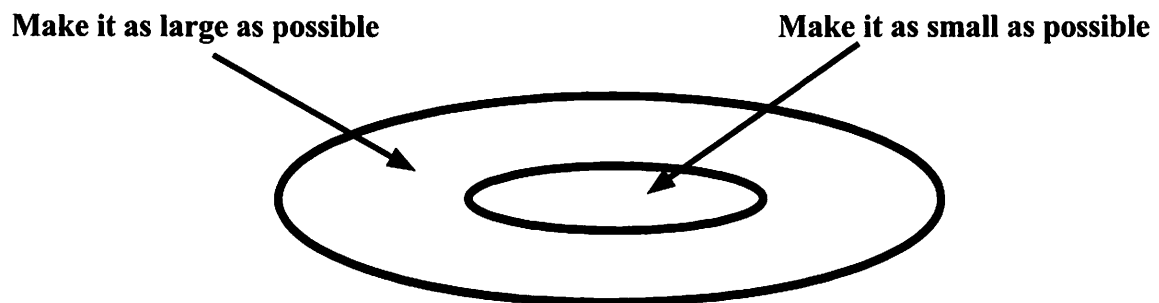
For repairing past emotional wounds:

Process the incident. Don't get back into it. There are two valid realities. Understand and validate your partner's reality. Use the Aftermath Blueprint.

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DIVIDE YOUR POSITION INTO TWO AREAS:

For this to work, you must use the Aikido principle: Yield to Win. In the Japanese martial art, Aikido, the idea is that direct opposition, i.e., two forces opposed, is a big mistake. We must yield to win. The truth for relationships is this:

YOU CANNOT BE INFLUENTIAL UNLESS YOU ACCEPT INFLUENCE

You may need a third circle that describes your common goals and common ground. You may need to talk about your fears, or nightmares about accepting influence. The therapist can help the couple arrive at a temporary compromise by talking about these areas as needed.